



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	CARMEL VALLEY, CA	Accident Number:	LAX95LA233
Date & Time:	07/01/1995, 0945 PDT	Registration:	N8399T
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-28-161	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Serious

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

Analysis

WHILE IN THE INITIAL TAKEOFF CLIMB FOR A 10-MILE FLIGHT TO ANOTHER AIRPORT, THE PILOT PERCEIVED A LOSS OF ENGINE POWER AND MANEUVERED TO RETURN TO THE AIRPORT. THE AIRCRAFT HAD INSUFFICIENT ALTITUDE TO REACH THE RUNWAY AND STRUCK POWER LINES WHILE TURNING TOWARDS THE AIRPORT. RESPONDING FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL REPORTED THAT THE RIGHT WING CONTAINED NO FUEL AND THE LEFT TANK CONTAINED VERY LITTLE FUEL. AN FAA INSPECTOR EXAMINED THE AIRCRAFT AND REPORTED THAT THE RIGHT WING FUEL TANK CONTAINED LESS THAN 1 GALLON, AND THE LEFT TANK CONTAINED ABOUT 5 GALLONS. THE FUEL SELECTOR WAS POSITIONED BETWEEN THE LEFT AND RIGHT TANKS. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT NO FUEL WAS AVAILABLE AT THE CARMEL VALLEY AIRPORT.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: fuel starvation due to the pilot's inadequate preflight preparation in that he failed to position the fuel selector to a tank known to contain fuel.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) FUEL TANK SELECTOR POSITION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) FUEL SUPPLY - NOT SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

5. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION

Factual Information

On July 1, 1995, at 0945 hours Pacific daylight time, a Piper PA28-161, N8399T, struck power lines during an attempted return to airport maneuver at Carmel Valley Airport, Carmel Valley, California. The maneuver was initiated by the pilot because of a perceived loss of engine power in the takeoff initial climb. The airplane was destroyed. The certificated private pilot and his passenger were seriously injured. The flight was originating at the time of the accident for a destination of Monterey Peninsula Airport, Monterey, California. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed.

According to the pilot's written report, he stated that he performed a preflight inspection and that the aircraft had 7 gallons of fuel. After taking off and reaching an altitude of 450 feet agl, the airplane lost engine power. The pilot initiated an immediate right turn towards the airport. After completing the emergency checklist, the pilot realized that the airplane would not glide back to the airport. He then chose an area away from people and structures for an emergency landing. After landing, the pilot shut off the master switch and waited for emergency personnel.

Responding fire department personnel reported that the right wing fuel tank contained no fuel. The left wing tank "contained very little fuel."

A Federal Aviation Administration inspector from the San Jose, California, Flight Standards District Office, examined the aircraft. He reported that the amount of fuel in each tank was measured at less than 1 gallon in the right tank and about 5 gallons in the left. The fuel selector was found positioned between the left and right fuel tank. The inspector also reported that no fuel is available at the Carmel Valley Airport.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	39, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	04/20/1994
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	116 hours (Total, all aircraft), 37 hours (Total, this make and model), 88 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 61 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 33 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8399T
Model/Series:	PA-28-161 PA-28-161	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	28-8116246
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	09/16/1994, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2325 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	80 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2145 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-D3G
Registered Owner:	ROBERT DAVID LAMVIK	Rated Power:	160 hp
Operator:	ROBERT DAVID LAMVIK	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MRY, 254 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0850 PDT	Direction from Accident Site:	300°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	20 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 1700 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	200°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	16 °C / 11 °C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(O62)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	MONTEREY, CA (MRY)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0945 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	CARMEL VALLEY (O62)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	450 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry; Rough
Runway Used:	29	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1820 ft / 35 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced Landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	JEFF R RICH	Report Date:	11/30/1995
Additional Participating Persons:	TONY CONSTANZA; SAN JOSE, CA		
Publish Date:			
Investigation Docket:	NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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